

## ***The Very Best Day:* Writer and Artist Roger Hutchison Talks Love and Life**

As a child, Roger Hutchison found a safe place under his grandmother's table. He inherited that table after she passed away. Once again, it became a haven—but this time to write, draw, paint, and process his grief. It was while sitting at that table that Roger wrote ***The Painting Table***, which is a “journal of loss and joy.”

Ever since then, the table has been his creative anchor, a sacred place to write and paint. “Painting and writing is very prayerful for me. We fill a lot of time [in everyday life] with words. I need to be quiet sometimes, and this is the way I do it,” he says.

### **The Emotional Universal**

Roger's work with processing grief brought him to Newtown, Connecticut, after the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. Working with the survivors and community at large, he says, “changed me at a cellular level.” He believes he has a calling to help children and families navigate through life's complex emotions.

Roger is intrigued by the challenge of writing for children. “[There is a tendency to] overwrite, but less—done better—is more. I love being a storyteller and speaking to a universal feeling, no matter the reader's age.”

His books, including his most recently released ***The Very Best Day***, is written for children but pertinent to people of all ages. It combines image and text to make complicated concepts accessible to audiences young and old.

Roger's visual work is often abstract. Finger-painting with acrylics, the artist in him revels in what he calls the accidental beauty that occurs in his work. “Surprises happen, and I can see the image reveal itself,” he says.

Readers may notice that many of Roger's books feature paintings of horizons. “They're a place where the sky meets the earth, a holy joining,” he says. “Those horizon lines and circles become the ‘God piece’ of the image, a way to think about what's beyond the horizon, above it, below it.”

### **Seven Rhythms in the Way of Love**

Roger is an avid admirer of The Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church. He responded to Bishop Curry's call to the Jesus Movement through his book ***Jesus: God Among Us***, a painting revealed in 16 parts.

Roger tries to build a framework around the “importance of caring for yourself, for your emotions.” He wrote ***The Very Best Day*** as a guide to practicing Bishop Curry's Way of Love initiative for both children and adults. He believes people should not wait until adulthood to establish the seven life rhythms—turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go, and rest.

“So many adults have some kind of anxiety issue or struggle. It’s important for children to realize that some days will be hard, but then remember to return to their seven touchstones for support,” he says. “I think if I had been taught the seven rhythms as a child, life would have been different for me. The earlier we start showing children how to honor their breathing and who they are, the more likely they will grow into healthier teenagers and adults.”

The author and artist hopes his books can inspire his readers to find faith in the midst of daily life. “Live your life as a prayer. Use your full body, mind, heart, and soul. We can model that as adults, and explore it with our children. What a gift that is.”

To order your copy of *The Very Best Day*, visit **Church Publishing Incorporated**.